

of General Services shall provide to the Commission on a nonreimbursable basis such administrative support services as the Commission may request in order for the Commission to carry out its responsibilities under this title.

SEC. 6108. REPORTS.

(a) **INTERIM REPORT.**—The Commission shall submit an interim report on its activities to Congress not later than 20 months after the date of the enactment of this title.

(b) **FINAL REPORT.**—

(1) **DEADLINE.**—The Commission shall submit a final report on its activities to Congress not later than 120 days after the submission of the interim report under subsection (a).

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The final report shall contain a detailed statement of the findings and conclusions of the Commission, together with its recommendations for proposed legislation.

SEC. 6109. TERMINATION.

The Commission shall terminate not later than 30 days after submitting its final report under section 6108(b)(1).

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 1015, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Chairman, when Katharine Lee Bates wrote "America the Beautiful" in 1893, I believe her poetic lyrics were intended to express the goodness of the American people as much as the natural beauty of our great Nation. America was founded on the concept of helping one another, and that selfless spirit expresses itself in countless acts of goodness by ordinary Americans every day.

I want to harness that American spirit, and I want to make it a part of the American experience. Mr. FARR, Mr. WALSH, and Mr. SHAYS have joined me in putting this amendment together, and we had a bill previously, because we believe that making this possible for every American is really where we ought to be.

We all benefit in countless ways from a Nation that is our home. I believe we owe something in return. But there are countless ways for every American to serve and give back to America, and America certainly could use their help. That's why we put this together as an amendment to establish a Congressional Commission on Civic Service.

We want this commission to investigate ways to create a broader commitment to national service in order to strengthen our common sense of responsibility to our community, our Nation, and to each other.

The commission would hold hearings around the country to engage the American people and get their own ideas. Whether it's in schools or nursing homes or prisons or mental hospitals or in the forests or cleaning up beaches or whatever, we want to talk to the local people. The commission would report to Congress with recommendations on how to harness the power of one, that is, the power of American people to improve our Nation.

Our amendment is a first step. It is simply an authorization, and the Congress will need to follow up with an appropriation. It mirrors the legislation we introduced last year, H.R. 1819.

Throughout the process, we have worked closely with some of America's best organizations: Voices for Service Coalition, the National Peace Corps Association, Corporation for National and Community Service, and the State AmeriCorps Administrators.

President John Kennedy once said: "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." From that came the Peace Corps and other organizations similar, and we want to recreate that sense of American expectation in this time. With this amendment we want to help America answer that question and the call.

Today America needs the American people like never before to meet the challenges of a slowing economy, health care, education, conservation. The government can't do it all, and ordinary Americans can and in many cases already do much of it.

It's time to build on the success of our national service programs like AmeriCorps by considering bold proposals that compel, inspire, and enable us to tackle the challenges, big and small, that will always confront us. There is no shortage of ideas.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PLATTTS. Mr. Chairman, I rise to claim the time in opposition, although I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. PLATTTS. Mr. Chairman, I do plan on supporting this amendment and appreciate the intended maker of the amendment. And to make sure that we are being thorough in our approach to this important issue, I do want to express just some reservation that we don't duplicate the efforts of the subcommittee and the work of the subcommittee or the corporation itself in exploring the ideals of public service, but I will be supporting it and encourage a "yes" vote.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. McCARTHY).

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. I thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) for yielding.

We support this amendment. We look forward to the results of the commission as we continue to increase the number of Americans who participate in national service and work to overcome challenges in our Nation's communities.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Chairman, I am waiting for Mr. FARR, but we will see if he gets here in time.

The recommendations produced by this commission would be a plan of ac-

tion because it will look at three key areas: to improve the ability of Americans to serve, to improve our community here and abroad. It will also identify and offer solutions to the barriers that make it difficult to perform national service and volunteer. And, finally, we will look at ways to build the foundation of service opportunities that are currently available.

According to the data collected from the Census Bureau, Americans over the age of 16 are volunteering at an historically high rate with 61.2 million, giving their time in 2006 to help others by mentoring students, beautifying neighborhoods, and restoring homes after disasters.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank Congressman McDERMOTT and Congressman FARR, Congresswoman MATSUI and the Committee on Education and Labor for all of their hard work on bringing this reauthorization to the floor today.

This amendment establishes a Congressional Commission on Civil Service. The Commission would identify ways to expand opportunities for volunteerism and national service in America. It would also recommend ways Federal and local governments can improve awareness and access to national service opportunities, encourage increased volunteerism and better train future public service leaders.

I believe national service is one of the most productive, cost-effective investments our Government can make.

I am pleased this amendment addresses the need for a public service academy, a federally-funded 4-year institution dedicated to training the future leaders of our country's public service sector. In the next 10 years, 90 percent of our nation's Federal executives will be over the age of 50 and nearing retirement. We need to ensure that this workforce is replaced with well-trained, invigorated graduates.

Investing in service opportunities provides enormous returns to communities.

There is no substitute for the passion of our Nation's volunteers, who can be found mentoring students, building houses, assisting senior citizens or beautifying our national parks.

Community service is about helping people, and it is also about gaining deeper understanding of each other and the world around us.

Through service, Americans of all ages gain a sense of commitment to their communities and their country which will prove valuable for the rest of their lives.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of this valuable program.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. All time has expired.

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. ENGLISH OF PENNSYLVANIA

The Acting CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 110-539.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.